



the
seafarers'
charity



Seafarers International Relief Fund



Background to the Fund

- The Seafarers International Relief Fund (SIRF) was launched on 5 May 2021. The Fund has been established by leading maritime welfare charities and shipping industry players initially to support seafarers and their families devastated by the rampant COVID-19 pandemic in India and other countries. The hope is that the SIRF can then be reactivated at times of future international emergencies affecting serving seafarers and their families. The SIRF will be administered through The Seafarers' Charity, itself a grant-making organisation.
- By collaborating and pooling our resources in the face of emergency – and setting an immediate target of US\$1 million – it is anticipated that more impact can be achieved in a shorter space of time than individually.
- More than US\$250,000 was committed to the Fund in pledges in the first week of fundraising. Concurrently, in excess of \$300,000 was initially requested in grant funding by NGOs operating on the ground, which is likely to substantially increase in coming months, so great is the need.
- Seafarer welfare charities and many shipping industry players have been working tirelessly since the start of the pandemic to minimise the crippling effect COVID-19 is having on seafarers' lives, and the lives of their families, hundreds of thousands of whom have been cut off from each other for months.
- Despite suggestions that the crew change crisis was envisaged to be near its end, the escalation of COVID-19 cases in India to more than 400,000 per day has prompted some major ports to prohibit ship crew changes for seafarers with recent travel history to India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. There are also restrictions being placed by some countries on seafarers emanating from the Philippines. This latest crisis, which has exacerbated the challenges that have come before, prompted this collective action.
- With the escalation of the emergency in India, a nation that is home to approximately 240,000 seafarers, the welfare charities and industry players felt an enhanced level of support and a speedy response was needed.

- Funds will initially be distributed by The Seafarers' Charity and coordinated by the supporting charities and their welfare partners to support seafarers and their families in India. However, even though India is the initial focus given the level of crisis there, the Fund has been established for the longer term and with the global seafarer community in mind, and we anticipate funds will target other specific regions for other future emergencies.
- The Fund has been established with the hope of generating unilateral support targeting individual and corporate donations from large and small companies related to shipping, including shipowners and operators, ship management companies, charterers, flag state representatives, banks, insurers, class, technology companies, ports... the list goes on. It is expected that donations to SIRF will provide an additional channel to the normal philanthropic support, and not replace existing funding provided to individual charities.
- In addition, we have set up a webpage to receive donations from smaller companies and individuals. This is a cause that affects us all as global consumers reliant upon sea transportation.

- To contribute to the Seafarers International Relief Fund by Bank Transfer, please use the details below:

Account Name: The Seafarers Charity
(Formerly Seafarers UK – KGFS)

Reference: Seafarers International Relief Fund (SIRF)

NatWest City of London Office

Sort Code: 60 00 01

Account No: 00 77 31 23

BIC: NWBKGB2L

IBAN: GB41NWBK60000100773123

To make a donation online, please visit:
<https://donate.theseafarerscharity.org/sirf> or
phone 020 7932 0000, quoting 'Seafarers
International Relief Fund'. Please note that
payments made online will be subject to a small
administration fee.

For any questions about making a donation
to support the Fund, please contact
keziah.cunningham@theseafarerscharity.org

- Initial pledges have been received from Ardmore Shipping, MSC, Cargill, Pacific Basin, Anglo Eastern, V Group, IRI (Marshall Islands Flag), Maritime Partners LLC, Liberian Shipowners Council Ltd, and Hafnia.
- This relief Fund is a human response to a humanitarian crisis and charities and industry players have come together to mobilise resources for seafarers and their families in a time of crisis and are not politically motivated.

Seafarers International Relief Fund (SIRF) is administered by

The Seafarers' Charity



The Seafarers' Charity was established in 1917 as The King George's Fund for Sailors (KGFS), conceived by far-sighted ship owners and officers and championed by King George V of the United Kingdom, responding to the crisis of WW1. This current crisis echoes our origins.

The Seafarers' Charity is the leading independent grant-making maritime welfare charity.

Working in collaboration with and in support of:

- Association for Seafarers' Mission
- Biblia Harbour Mission
- Christian Seaman's Organisation
- Danske Sømands-og Udlandskirker
- Deutsche Seemannsmission e.V. (DSM)
- Estonian Seamen's Mission
- Indenlansk Sømandsmission
- International Christian Maritime Association (ICMA)
- International Seafarers' Welfare and Assistance Network (ISWAN)
- Mersey Mission to Seafarers
- Naval & Military Bible Society
- North American Maritime Ministry Association (NAMMA)
- Nederlandse Zeevarendencentrale
- Seemannsmission der Nordkirche
- PCT Seamen's/Fishermen's Service Center
- Sailors' Society
- Seamen's Church Institute (SCI) of New York & New Jersey
- Seamen's Christian Friend Society
- Sjømannskirken / Norwegian Church Abroad
- Sjömanskyrkan I Sverige (SiS) (The Seamen's Church in Sweden)
- Stella Maris
- Stichting Pastoraat Werkers Overzee
- Suomen Merimieskirkko
- The Mission to Seafarers





SEAWOLF



#SIRFSOLIDARITY



Purpose of The Seafarers International Relief Fund

The Fund was set up to raise funds to enable NGOs to deliver a welfare response in India initially, but with the ability to extend support to seafarers as defined by MLC 2006 and their families in other countries experiencing a humanitarian crisis.

It is intended that this will provide a model for an agile collaborative response to future maritime emergencies. It is non-denominational, and applications can be made by any organisation supporting seafarers as defined by the MLC 2006.

Objectives of the Fund

This Fund will support seafarers and their families facing urgent humanitarian crises. This Fund has been established with two primary objectives:

- to raise funds from the broad maritime community and associated support industries;
- to award grants to deliver agile charitable responses to urgent humanitarian crises in support of seafarers and their immediate families.

This is in addition to normal NGO operations to respond to 'steady state' seafarers' needs and emergencies in the maritime sector and is not intended to replace individual fundraising by the maritime charities for their regular operational activities.

Scope

Grants will be awarded to respond to needs identified in the country and local area.

Best endeavours will be used to avoid duplication and overlap of services and interventions amongst maritime charities, relief initiatives and Government services.

Please refer to Appendices for country-specific detail as determined by need. Please note that needs will evolve and SIRF will respond to changing need within the scope of the Fund.

The Fund will not generally provide grants in respect of services or items that:

- are being provided by Government;
- are the responsibility of individual shipping companies for their employees as required by the MLC 2006;
- should be provided by legally responsible parties, e.g. ship owners, governments, and/or crewing agencies.

Roles and Responsibilities

Governance of the Fund will be overseen by a Stakeholder Group. There will also be an Advisory Panel of identified experts who are available for individual consultation. The expertise and knowledge of these individuals will help to inform grant recommendations. Operational grants management will be conducted by the experienced team at The Seafarers' Charity utilising their existing established grant management processes and decision-making practices in line with priorities and principles set by the Stakeholder Group.

Stakeholder Group

The Stakeholder Group will:

- provide strategic direction to the Fund, determine priorities in respect of raising awareness of the Fund amongst industry and determine areas of greatest need;
- bring partners together to provide strategic direction and raise awareness of the Fund amongst the shipping industry to achieve the fundraising goals of US\$1m that will subsequently be disbursed by The Seafarers' Charity in line with priorities established by the Stakeholder Group;
- have a secretariat and be supported by a project manager seconded from industry;
- receive regular reports on the success of marketing initiatives, promotional activity, money raised, and grants awarded after completion of the set-up phase;
- meet virtually. Meetings will be held regularly during the initial set up of the Fund. It is anticipated that meetings will be held quarterly upon completion of the set-up phase;
- have representation from industry and maritime welfare charities. There will be a total membership of 10 persons. Industry and charities will each be responsible for determining their own representatives in the Stakeholder Group;
- be initially chaired by Catherine Spencer, CEO of The Seafarers' Charity, and reviewed bi-annually;
- be reviewed following an initial period of six months, to reflect and assess the appropriateness and effectiveness of membership.



Representatives will be:

- International Christian Maritime Association
- International Seafarers Welfare Assistance Network
- The Mission to Seafarers
- Sailors' Society
- Stella Maris
- The Seafarers' Charity
- International Chamber of Shipping
- Ardmore Shipping
- V Ships – Global

Membership of the Advisory Panel and Working Group will comprise a broader range of organisations and people to reflect the location of the crisis and expertise needed.



Advisory Panel

The Advisory Panel will:

- comprise a small number of individuals with expertise and knowledge of the needs of seafarers and of delivering welfare support;
- be individually called upon by The Seafarers' Charity's grant-making team as needed to help inform recommendations on grant awards;
- be flexible to comprise appropriate people depending on the emergency.

Working Group

The main maritime welfare organisations will have a need to collaborate and plan their delivery of welfare services. The Working Group will:

- be established to ensure a planned and co-ordinated approach to delivery and to avoid overlap and duplication;
- help to provide coordination in respect of grant awards and subsequently, sharing good practice in collaborating on delivering welfare services on the ground;
- initially determine what is needed to ensure compliance with relevant financial restrictions;
- agree who will chair and co-ordinate meetings.

Operational Management of Fund

The Seafarers' Charity will:

- be responsible for the Grant-making management and decision-making carried out by The Seafarers' Charity using existing established practices and processes;
- utilise its professional grant-making team to conduct due diligence, analysis, and assessment of all grant applications. This will include engaging with individual members of the Advisory Panel when relevant to do so;
- ensure that the budget for grant awards will be managed, monitored, and reported upon by the Impact Director;
- will provide a report to the ICS and maritime welfare charities on funds raised and grants awarded as agreed with relevant stakeholders for publicity and fundraising purposes;
- seek where possible to ensure that grant award decisions will be made within one week of receipt of an application by The Seafarers' Charity's experienced Grants Committee;
- ensure there is a bespoke application process specific to and only for this Fund;
- manage due diligence and assessment of funds disbursed using existing practices and established processes;
- manage monitoring and evaluation of disbursed funds and provide an Impact Report after the Fund has been in operation for one year.

Financial Management of the Fund

The Seafarers' Charity will:

- operate a dedicated restricted fund solely for the Fund. Monies raised for the Fund will be held in a restricted fund within The Seafarers' Charity;
- not charge for distributing funds;
- waive bank transfer charges;
- use its own funds to pay for the Enthuse fundraising platform fees. This will ensure that 100% of funds donated will be awarded in grants;
- relevant anti-money laundering processes will be adhered to, and include compliance with relevant financial legislation;
- report costs of operating the Fund to the Stakeholder Group.

Meetings and Reporting

As the Fund:

- develops it will be necessary to meet to determine promotional needs to support fundraising. A report will be regularly provided on funds raised;
- becomes established, the online Enthuse platform will be updated with a daily total to include offline donations received via bank transfer at 4pm each working day.

Once the Fund is operational, a quarterly meeting of the Stakeholder Group will be held to review progress on the Fund and determine future fundraising publicity needs.

The Seafarers' Charity will deliver:

- a report to the ICS and maritime welfare charities on funds raised and grants awarded as agreed one week prior to the meeting date;
- an Impact Report one year after the Fund has been established;
- a process to ensure that all stakeholders have sight of press releases and that communications are signed off appropriately to avoid errors.

Grant Funding Principles

The funded activity must be charitable in nature and can be provided by charities, social partners or other not-for-profit organisations.

Initially, the Fund will provide a charitable welfare response in India. The Stakeholder Group will identify and include other areas and priorities as required by need.

Funded services will primarily benefit working age seafarers directly or their immediate dependants. Retired seafarers are outside of the scope of the Fund but may be included in specific circumstances only if part of a programme primarily supporting working age seafarers.

A need for funded interventions was evidenced by surveying charities and ICS members.

The Fund is focused on providing grant funding for a range of welfare services such as delivery of personal protective equipment, food distribution or food vouchers, medication, bereavement counselling, family support, and potentially, hardship grants.

The aim is to use best endeavours to avoid duplication and overlap of services and interventions from other maritime charities, relief initiatives, and Government services.

Joint applications to support partnership working in identified areas are encouraged where possible and will be prioritised, particularly in respect of utilising local networks to increase outreach and awareness of available support.

To the extent possible, there should be coordination amongst the NGOs; particularly to ensure parity regarding hardship grant award payments.

Good ideas capable of being replicated will be shared with others operating similar services and interventions.

A decision on grant applications will be made within one week of receipt of application.

The Fund will not normally provide grant funding in respect of services or items that are:

- being provided by Government;
- the responsibility of individual shipping companies for their employees;
- to be provided by legally responsible parties e.g. ship owners, governments, and/or crewing agencies.



Appendix

India – Scope of Fund

Grants will be awarded to respond to needs identified in the local area. An initial assessment of the needs of seafarers and their families conducted by The Mission to Seafarers has identified the following priorities for immediate essential aid: personal protective equipment, food distribution or food vouchers, bereavement counselling, family support, and potentially, hardship grants.

Structural support mechanisms are required for grant funding to enable delivery of these services and supplies. These include:

- project coordination in India;
- caseworkers in India who can provide outreach and assess family need;
- operational logistic and delivery costs for funded maritime welfare charities and organisations working in India.

Best endeavours will be used to avoid duplication and overlap of services and interventions amongst maritime charities, relief initiatives, and Government services.

Other Potential Engagement

The Fund will develop communications and methods of working with other potential stakeholders as appropriate such as:

- International Chambers of Shipping
- BOND and members already working on overseas development initiatives in the region
- Red Cross has 40,000 operational staff in India
- Oxfam India
- Care India



**Seafarers
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